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Human resources management

Overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce

Mobility

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Summary

Delivering on the mandates entrusted to the United Nations around the world requires a workforce that is global, dynamic and adaptable. The Secretary-General's goal is to build on the foundations already put in place to deliver a more structured approach to mobility which will improve the ability of the Organization to deliver its mandates, helping ensure that the right people are in the right position at the right time and allowing the Organization and staff to benefit systematically from the opportunities that mobility affords. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 63/250 and 65/247, and following extensive consultations with staff, the endorsement of the General Assembly is therefore sought of a proposed framework for mobility and career development of internationally recruited staff in the United Nations Secretariat.

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Glossary of terms for the mobility framework

Career development

The systematic process of matching as closely as possible the aspirations of a staff member at each phase of his or her career with the needs of the Organization for the mutual benefit of both. The responsibility for career growth and development is shared by the staff member and the Organization, and supported by the manager. The staff member is the key driver for the career planning process and the Organization provides the structural support.

Functional mobility

Movement between two positions in different job families, for continuous service of at least one year in each position.

Geographic mobility

Movement between two duty stations in different countries, with continuous service of at least one year in each duty station.^a

Job family

A specific occupational area within a job network. In a job family, the same or relatively similar work is performed, a similar skill set is required and it is possible to move within the family with minimal training.

Job network

Grouping of job families with closely linked mandates or programmes of work and which require similar skill sets.

Job network board

Each job network has a job network board, consisting of representatives of staff and management in equal numbers and human resources staff, which reviews selection/(re)assignment of staff in the Field Service and Professional categories (P-1 to P-5).^b Representatives of staff and management on the boards must be at the level of the positions being considered and from the relevant network.

Mobility

The movement of staff from one position to another for the purpose of encouraging and stimulating the growth of staff, as well as responding to the needs of the Organization. A position change can involve one or a combination of the following: a change of role; a change of function; a change of department; a change of duty

^a Definition as agreed by the General Assembly in paragraph 54 (d) of its resolution 65/247. To note however that moves between different duty stations in the same country count internally for the purposes of the payment of the relevant allowances.

^b Staff at the P-1/P-2 level who were appointed through the Young Professionals Programme/ national competitive recruitment examination would be reassigned through existing mechanisms.

station; or a move from the Secretariat to a fund, programme or agency. Mobility can be via a lateral move or a move to a position at a higher level.

Network staffing officer

A staff member within a job network who manages the process related to selection/(re)assignment and ensures the provision of career counselling and support to staff members.

Position occupancy limit

The minimum and maximum time a staff member can serve in a position.

Role

A role encompasses all the specific responsibilities (i.e. actual duties) to be performed by a staff member occupying a specific position.

Senior review board

Recommendations for selection/(re)assignment at the D-1 and D-2 levels are conducted by a single senior review board, which is comprised of representatives at the Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General levels, normally with prior experience in the United Nations common system. The membership of the senior review board will not include representatives of staff.

I. Introduction

1. As elaborated in earlier reports of the Secretary-General (see A/60/692 and Corr.1 and A/61/255), the overall objective of human resources reform in the United Nations is to develop and retain a workforce that is global, dynamic and adaptable in order to ensure that the Organization is able to deliver on the diverse and complex mandates entrusted to it by Member States. Achieving this vision has required major reforms. The approval by the General Assembly of streamlined contractual arrangements and the harmonization of conditions of service in the field enabled the integration of the field and Headquarters into one global Secretariat and removed a number of barriers to the mobility of staff. Building on the success of these previous reform efforts, and pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 63/250 and 65/247, the Secretary-General, in consultation with staff representatives, has developed a proposed mobility and career development framework for staff in the Professional category and above, as well as the Field Service category, that aims to deliver his vision. Work is ongoing on a career development framework for locally recruited staff.

2. The framework set out in the present report is based on the principle that, with few exceptions, all internationally recruited staff should move at regular intervals and that staff should be able to make choices that meet their mobility and career development aspirations. The framework, described in detail below, establishes maximum position occupancy limits, ranging from three to seven years depending on the hardship classification of the duty station. Staff would be expected to apply for positions before reaching the maximum position occupancy limit. Staff could apply to any position for which they are qualified in the same or in another duty station. To encourage geographic and functional mobility, priority in selection would be given to internal staff applying to a different duty station or to a different job family. Staff who have not moved to other positions after reaching their maximum position occupancy limit would be reassigned by the Organization.

3. The proposed mobility and career development framework would require a number of changes to the current staff selection system, including the introduction of priority considerations for selection, the establishment of job network boards that would manage the selection process and a realignment of existing human resources capacity to support the mobility system. The framework, once approved, would be implemented in a phased manner by job network.

4. The proposed framework presented in the report is a result of extensive negotiations between management and staff representatives at the first meeting of the Staff Management Committee, held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 14 to 22 June 2012. As such, it reflects a balanced approach to mobility that takes into account the needs of the Organization and the career aspirations of staff members.

II. Context

5. Enhancing staff mobility has been part of the human resources strategy of the Organization since the early 1990s. In its resolution 49/222, the General Assembly urged the Secretary-General to apply the mobility elements of the new human resources strategy to internationally recruited staff, and in its resolution 51/226, the

Assembly requested the Secretary-General to pursue the development and implementation of the managed reassignment programmes for entry-level and other staff.

6. The General Assembly, in its resolution 53/221, also emphasized the requirement of mobility of all internationally recruited staff of the Organization as an integral part of their obligation, and requested the Secretary-General to give full consideration to the need for greater mobility in the context of human resources planning, in accordance with staff regulation 1.2 (c).¹ In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish mechanisms towards, and to implement a policy of, enhanced mobility across functions, departments and duty stations.

7. The need for enhanced mobility was recognized in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the "Brahimi Report") (A/55/305), in which the need for a field-facing culture at Headquarters was stressed. It was also highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Investing in people", in which he called for further action to strengthen the organizational mobility policy to ensure that it meets both the needs of the Organization and individual staff members (A/61/255, para. 139). In the same report the Secretary-General stated that once mobility had been institutionalized as an integral part of each staff member's career, it was expected that this would result in increased flexibility and responsiveness by preparing staff to operate in a multidisciplinary environment (*ibid.*, para. 157).

8. To promote mobility in the Organization, therefore, a number of measures have been taken over the years. For example, a centrally managed reassignment programme was established in 2000 (see ST/AI/2001/7) for the junior professional staff in the organization who had entered via the national competitive recruitment examination. The new Young Professionals Programme also established geographic mobility as an integral part of their careers by providing that the second assignment should be at a different duty station (ST/AI/2012/2, para. 8.2).

9. In May 2002, a mobility policy was established as a central part of the staff selection system to support the development of a more flexible and experienced international civil service. That policy introduced position occupancy limits (five years up to the P-5 level and six years above the P-5 level). The position occupancy period started anew each time the staff member moved as a result of selection, within a managed reassignment programme or as a lateral move to a position with different functions. Staff who reached their maximum position occupancy limits were subject to managed reassignment programmes. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the mobility policy (A/63/208), however, while the 2002 policy resulted in some movement of staff between and within departments, greater mobility could have been achieved if a number of impediments had been addressed. Following consultation with staff representatives at the meeting of the Staff Management Coordination Committee in June 2008, it was decided to suspend the mobility programme so that a review could be undertaken of the lessons learned.

¹ Staff regulation 1.2 (c) reads in part: "Staff members are subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him or her to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations."

10. Another mobility measure taken by the Organization was the voluntary initiative for network exchange programme (VINEs), which was developed as a means of facilitating lateral job swaps with participating staff. A number of programmes were run between 2008 and 2011, but despite a high level of interest by staff, the number of moves was relatively limited — only 33 staff out of 401 eligible and confirmed participants actually moved, in part because of the high rate of drop out and the cascading effect of each drop out from the system.

11. The present staff selection system has fostered staff mobility since 2007 by requiring two lateral moves for all staff in order to be eligible for posts at the P-5 level. The system also provides incentive to staff movement to areas where vacancy rates are higher by requiring only one lateral move when a staff member has served in the Professional category in Nairobi or a regional economic commission other than the Economic Commission for Europe, or any duty station with a hardship classification of A, B, C, D or E for one year or longer, or when a staff member is applying for a P-5 position at those duty stations from another duty station. The requirement for lateral moves is waived entirely for staff who have served for one year or longer in a non-family mission or duty station (see ST/AI/2010/3, para. 6.3).

III. Current mobility patterns

12. Mobility is currently taking place in the Organization, but it is with little or no management and is unevenly distributed. For example, between 2006 and 2011, there were 6,002 continuously serving internationally recruited staff (excluding Field Service). A total of 2,865 of those staff changed their duty station; however, many made short-term moves, leading to a total of 5,979 duty station changes during that time period.² Other staff spend long periods in the same positions: as at 31 March 2012 at least 1,129 internationally recruited staff (excluding Field Service) had spent more than five years in the same position. Research on human resources has also shown that job satisfaction and involvement tends to peak in the first four years in a job and plateau or drop thereafter. It is therefore disadvantageous for both the Organization and for the staff member to get stuck in a job.

13. The Organization continues to face challenges in its staffing. Despite improvements in the overall vacancy rate in the field, certain missions, for example the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, where the vacancy rate as of 30 June 2012 was 22.6 per cent,³ face chronic difficulties in filling their international positions. There are also disproportionately high vacancy rates in certain duty stations and categories of staff. For example in the past five years, the Economic Commission for Africa had vacancy rates between 14 and 21 per cent, with the most acute shortages in language positions. The Organization has no ability under the current system to address these issues systematically and deploy staff where they are most needed.

² Data from the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). Staff who had a break in service, those on temporary contracts, in the Tribunals and those administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) were excluded.

³ Field Personnel Division/Information Management Unit and Registry statistics for international staff (Professional and Field Service).

14. As the system does not ensure regular exposure of staff to new career opportunities and challenges, the Organization does not reap the full benefits of a more widely experienced staff, which is critical for a global Organization that is increasingly field-oriented and operational. Nor does the current system meet the aspirations of staff. A Secretariat-wide survey conducted in January 2012⁴ showed that a large majority (79 per cent) of internationally recruited staff had expected to work in different duty stations when they joined the Secretariat. A total of 86 per cent considered it important that internationally recruited staff work in different departments, offices or missions, and 66 per cent thought it was important to work in different duty stations. In addition, a large majority (over 70 per cent) believed staff should move to new positions every few years, and 81 per cent wanted the Organization to assume greater responsibility for moving them between different positions and/or duty stations periodically.

15. Thus, at present the potential benefits of mobility are not being realized, either in terms of building the experience and skills of staff members, or in helping the Organization to carry out its mandate by placing staff where they are needed in a timely and effective manner. A workforce that moves around in a more structured manner, and can therefore be more strategically deployed, would help address these challenges. With recent reforms allowing for a more integrated and interoperable Secretariat, the time is ripe for a more structured mobility system which provides a durable solution to these issues, as set out in section IV below.

IV. Key elements of the mobility and career development framework

16. The current proposal for a comprehensive mobility framework has been based on the lessons learned from past initiatives, a detailed analysis of the current Secretariat workforce and position distribution, and research on best practices of other organizations within the United Nations common system and national and international institutions. Intensive consultations with staff representatives have also been a key part of the process. The Staff Management Coordination Committee at its thirty-first session, in June 2010, agreed to reactivate the Working Group on Career Development and Mobility to respond to the Secretary-General's request to develop an agreed comprehensive mobility framework. The Working Group met regularly starting in December 2011 via videoconference and held in-person consultations in Geneva in March 2012. The newly formed Staff Management Committee held a special session on mobility from 30 April to 4 May 2012 and finalized the proposed mobility framework in the present report at its first regular meeting, held from 14 to 22 June 2012.

17. The Staff Management Committee agreed that the mobility and career development framework had three main objectives:

- (a) It should enable the Organization to better retain and deploy a dynamic, adaptable and global workforce that can effectively meet current and future mandates and evolving operational needs;

⁴ A total of 14,774 staff members responded (38 per cent of the overall United Nations Secretariat population); 8,465 respondents were internationally recruited staff (58 per cent of all international staff); and 6,309 respondents were locally recruited (26 per cent of all local staff).

(b) It should provide staff with broader opportunities for career development and contribution to the Organization and enable the further acquisition of new skills, knowledge and experience within and across departments, functions and duty stations;

(c) It should ensure that staff members have equal opportunities for service across the United Nations and, for relevant functions, a fair sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations.

These objectives would contribute to ensuring the Organization's global relevance, enhancing its credibility, and furthering the goal of serving as one United Nations.

18. The proposal outlined below aims to achieve these objectives, while taking into account the diverse functions and unique features of the Secretariat. The result is a framework that would allow mobility requirements to be tailored to the needs of each functional area. The proposed framework also strikes a balance between a purely voluntary and a fully centrally managed system. Staff would choose when and where to apply for positions, according to their own preferences and requirements, within the minimum and maximum position occupancy limits. A centralized system of boards would allow for more strategic deployment of staff; the boards would review each compendium of positions and the pool of applicants and make selection recommendations with a view to optimize the staffing decisions. This is a change from the current situation where individual hiring managers make selection decisions about individual positions on a case-by-case basis.

Scope

19. The proposed mobility framework would apply to all internal staff⁵ of the Secretariat in the Professional category and above up to and including the D-2 level, as well as to staff in the Field Service category, holding fixed-term, continuing and permanent appointments, except those on non-rotational positions.

20. A non-rotational position is one that requires an advanced level of expertise, knowledge and qualification in a technical field and where there is no comparable position at the same level in another organizational unit or duty station in the Secretariat. All other positions would be considered rotational, and staff occupying those positions would be subject to position occupancy limits and any relevant network-specific mobility requirements. Staff on non-rotational positions could become subject to the mobility framework by applying to and being selected for rotational positions.

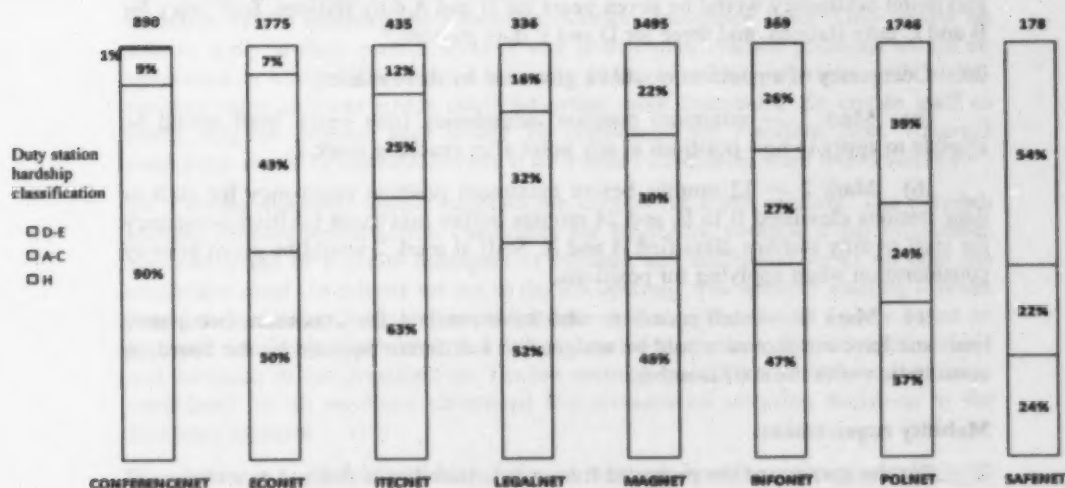
21. Staff members within five years of the mandatory age of separation could choose to be exempted from geographic mobility. In order to recognize staff members who have already undertaken significant geographic mobility, those staff members who have undergone at least seven geographic moves of one year or longer would be able to choose if they want to be geographically mobile (subject to the requirements of the relevant job network).

⁵ Internal staff are those that have gone through a competitive process, including review by a field/central review body, and whose appointment is not limited to a specific department/office/mission.

Job networks

22. The proposed mobility framework would be managed within job networks. Managing mobility through job networks would provide a more coherent approach to the career development of staff and a better linkage of career development to evolving operational needs. Networks would be able to provide greater clarity on the skills and experience expected of staff in different functions, with a view towards the future needs within their respective fields of work. The figure below shows the composition of the current job networks by duty station hardship classification, which demonstrates that one size does not fit all — some job networks would have limited options for service in different duty stations, whereas others would have many. The current job networks will be reconfigured to ensure a more consistent distribution of staff and positions within relevant groupings of job families.

Composition of current job networks: total number of staff members in the Professional and Director categories^a broken down by percentage in each hardship classification in 2011



Note: Data from IMIS as of 30 June 2011. Staff on temporary contracts, in the Tribunals and those administered by UNDP were excluded. The current job networks are as follows: (a) conference services (CONFERENCE NET), (b) economic and social development (ECONET), (c) communications and information technology (ITECNET), (d) legal (LEGALNET), (e) management and operations support (MAGNET), (f) public information and external relations (INFONET), (g) political, peace and security (POLNET) and (h) safety and security (SAFENET).

^a The majority of Field Service staff belong to MAGNET and serve in D-E duty stations.

23. Each job network would have a job network board responsible for recommending selection and reassignment of staff in positions within that network. The boards would consist of representatives of staff, management and the Office of Human Resources Management to review and recommend the selection and

reassignment of staff in the Field Service and Professional (P-1 to P-5) categories.⁶ Recommendations for selection and reassignment of staff at the D-1 to D-2 levels would be undertaken by a single senior review board composed of Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General.

24. Job networks would be supported by teams of network staffing officers with human resources expertise and operational knowledge of the particular job network, including with respect to vacancies and skills requirements. The network staffing officers would carry out human resources activities related to the selection process, including advertising job openings, reviewing candidates for eligibility and suitability, obtaining the views of managers and organizing documentation for review by job network boards. Network staffing officers would also act as career advisers to staff members, working to match their aspirations and skills to the operational requirements of the network.

Position occupancy limits

25. Staff encumbering rotational positions would be subject to minimum and maximum occupancy limits. The minimum would be one year for all positions. The maximum occupancy would be seven years for H and A duty stations, four years for B and C duty stations, and three for D and E duty stations.⁷

26. Occupancy of a position would be governed by three marks:

(a) Mark 1 — minimum position incumbency (one year). Staff would be eligible to apply to new positions at any point after reaching mark 1;

(b) Mark 2 — 12 months before maximum position occupancy for staff in duty stations classified B to E, and 24 months before maximum position occupancy for staff in duty stations classified H and A. Staff at mark 2 would be given priority consideration when applying for positions;

(c) Mark 3 — staff members who have reached the maximum occupancy limit and have not moved would be assigned to a different position by the board, in consultation with the staff member.

Mobility requirements

27. For the purpose of the proposed framework, mobility is defined as a change of position. A position change can involve one or a combination of the following: a change of role; a change of function; a change of department; a change of duty station; or a move from the Secretariat to a United Nations agency, fund or programme. Mobility can be via a lateral movement or a move to a position at a higher level.

28. Geographic mobility would not be a requirement for all staff, but would be required only where relevant and beneficial. Geographic mobility would, however,

⁶ Staff at the P-1/P-2 level who were appointed through the Young Professionals Programme/ national competitive recruitment examination would not be included.

⁷ The International Civil Service Commission has placed each duty station in one of six categories. H duty stations are headquarters and similarly designated locations, where the United Nations has no development or humanitarian assistance programmes, or locations in countries which are members of the European Union. A to E duty stations are field duty stations. Duty stations are categorized on a scale of hardship from A to E, with A being the least difficult.

be expected of staff who wish to reach senior levels. This is to ensure that senior managers have a broader understanding of the work of the United Nations through exposure to different duty stations. Under the proposed framework, a staff member would need at least one prior geographic move of one year or more to be eligible to progress to positions at the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels. This move could take place at any point during the staff member's career and would replace the current requirement for lateral moves under the existing staff selection system.

29. During the preparation phase, the job network boards would be able to define any additional network-specific mobility requirements for their respective networks, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management and with the agreement of the Staff Management Committee.

Selection and reassignment

30. The proposed framework would require significant changes to the way the Organization manages internal and external selection of staff, although the management of movement to a higher level would be similar to the current system.

31. Under the proposed framework, staff would be expected to apply to vacant positions before reaching the maximum position occupancy limit. They would be able to apply at their current level or one level higher. Vacant positions would be advertised in compendiums on a quarterly basis. However, networks with higher vacancy rates or surge needs could advertise more frequently. To enable staff to move, eligible internal staff would be considered for positions first. External candidates would be considered only if no internal candidates were found suitable.

32. Hiring managers would establish the criteria for a job opening. The network staffing officers would screen candidates for eligibility, compile a list of suitable candidates and then invite managers to transmit any additional views on how the candidates meet the criteria set out in the job opening. The network staffing officers would then make preliminary recommendations to the job network boards based on the staff member's application and career development plans, the manager's views and the needs of the Organization. The job network boards would review all suitable candidates for all positions advertised and recommend selection decisions to the Secretary-General.

33. In order to facilitate mobility, the job network boards would give priority to certain categories of staff, such as those from a hardship duty station applying to another duty station, when making recommendations.

Reassignment pool

34. Staff who reach the maximum occupancy limit and have not been selected for positions would be placed in a reassignment pool. The board could, in consultation with the staff members concerned, reassign such staff to any positions the board finds suitable, without the staff members necessarily having applied.

35. In the interest of the staff members concerned and the Organization, job network boards will make their best efforts to reassign staff members serving in D or E duty stations who have reached the maximum occupancy limit to duty stations that are not categorized as D or E.

36. Should there be no appropriate reassignment option, the staff member could remain in the same position and participate in the following reassignment exercise, unless selected for another position in the meantime.

Special constraints panel

37. For those staff in the reassignment pool who could, in theory, be reassigned to positions they had not applied for, there would be a special constraints panel comprised of staff and management representatives in equal numbers to consider exceptional requests to remain in the same duty station. Approval would be granted based on clear criteria, including medical reasons or other compelling personal circumstances where a change of duty station would create undue hardship.

38. The special constraints panel would also consider requests made jointly by the manager and staff member for a staff member to remain in his or her position when the staff member is engaged in a project, the success of which would be harmed by mobility.

39. The recommendations of the special constraints panel would be submitted to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management for approval.

V. Benefits of a more structured approach to mobility

40. Under the current staffing system, movements depend solely on staff being selected by individual hiring managers. Neither the Organization nor staff themselves benefit systematically from the opportunities that mobility should afford. There are clear benefits to the proposed system, as set out below.

Better vacancy management

41. Under the proposed new system, while staff would continue to have a choice of which positions to apply for, the final selection recommendations would be made by central boards that would be global, that is to say, handling similar functions across the Organization. The boards would thus have a global view of the supply and demand for staff and the available talent pool. This would allow the Secretary-General, through the boards, to make more strategic choices and to match staff to where they are most needed on a global level, in a way that the current system, based on individual department head decisions, cannot.

Less time spent by managers on staffing tasks

42. The job network boards would also relieve managers of much of the work currently spent on staffing. On average, managers take 112 days to go through the process of reviewing applications, assessing candidates and making selection recommendations. Under the new system, human resources staff would undertake more of the work of assessing and shortlisting suitable candidates, including solicitation of hiring manager views, while the boards would make the final selection recommendations. This would eliminate some of the steps in the current selection system and allow managers to spend significantly less time on staffing tasks, thereby enabling an increased focus on their substantive responsibilities.

Global workforce

43. There are currently particular challenges in terms of movement between Headquarters and other, more difficult locations. Without any mechanisms in place to assist staff in obtaining other positions, some staff are concerned about moving to field duty stations for fear of becoming "stuck". At the same time, staff away from Headquarters often feel they are overlooked for positions elsewhere because they are too far away. The proposed system will help remove these barriers, through the enforcement of position occupancy limits and by giving priority to staff applying from other duty stations. This will create increased opportunities for staff to move to different duty stations, with greater assurance that they will be able to move on at the end of their occupancy limits.

44. The current staff selection policy includes lateral move requirements for staff to be eligible for promotion to the P-5 level and above. Under the proposed framework, this would be replaced by the requirement for one geographic move in order to be eligible for promotion to the P-5 level. Staff will thus have experienced at least one other duty station before they take on senior management positions, giving them vital knowledge and understanding of the Organization.

Career development

45. Changing positions can help reinvigorate the workforce, which benefits both staff members and the Organization, including through sharing knowledge and breaking down organizational "silos".

46. The proposed approach would also allow for a more coherent approach to career development. Job networks would be able to provide greater clarity on the knowledge, attributes and experience expected of staff in different functions, with a view towards the future needs of the Organization, and boards would be better able to take this systematically into account when making selection decisions than individual hiring managers could. Network staffing officers would also be able to recommend learning activities to enhance skills and knowledge and provide guidance on positions to which staff members should apply.

Improved performance

47. Research in human resources management indicates that the performance evaluations of staff who have been mobile show measurable improvements, with the improved trend continuing for approximately three years after their return. Mobile staff were also more likely than those who were not mobile to be promoted after their assignment.

VI. Implementation

48. Following approval by the General Assembly of the mobility framework, a mobility policy will be in place as of 1 January 2013. However, a two-year preparation phase would be necessary, followed by a period of staged implementation starting on 1 January 2015. During the two-year preparation period, the current staff selection system would remain in force for all staff members; however, to assist staff who wish to be mobile and to provide relief to staff in hardship duty stations pending the implementation of the mobility framework,

internationally recruited staff members applying from other duty stations would be given priority for selection, in particular staff applying from D or E duty stations.⁶

49. During the preparation phase, the modalities for implementing the mobility framework would be developed. Work would be undertaken to identify non-rotational positions, redefine job networks, establish job networks boards and the senior review board, identify and train network staffing officers, develop criteria to be used by the job networks in determining any additional geographic, functional and/or lateral mobility requirements, prepare administrative issuances and terms of reference for the various boards and review options for supporting staff and families.

50. In terms of supporting mobility, the Office of Human Resources Management would need to lead work to review existing global human resources capacities across the Organization, including in executive offices of departments, units in offices away from Headquarters, regional commissions and field missions. This would include looking at roles and responsibilities and reprofiling and/or retraining human resources staff as necessary. In addition, career development and learning activities, as well as the performance management system, will need to be adapted to the needs of a mobile workforce. Table 1 provides a timeline for the preparation of the framework.

Table 1

Broad timeline for preparation of the mobility framework

2013

Identify rotational/non-rotational positions

Work with departments to start reconfiguring job networks

Identify the job networks that will be phased in first

Formulate new staff selection procedures

Identify elements in Inspira that will need to be redesigned

Initiate Staff Management Committee working groups to continue consultation with staff on overall mobility framework, staff and family support programmes, performance management, and mobility and career development opportunities for locally recruited staff

Amend current staff selection policy to include transitional measures

Develop policy and procedural framework for implementation of mobility:

- Develop terms of reference, rules of procedure and operating guidelines for the job network boards, including the workflow and processes
- Develop terms of reference, rules of procedure and operating guidelines for the senior review board, including the workflow and processes

⁶ If the present framework is agreed, ST/AI/2010/3 would be amended to provide for priority to be given to staff applying from other duty stations from 1 January 2013.

- Develop rules of procedure and guidelines for the special constraints panel

Formulate new administrative issuances to reflect the changes relating to the mobility framework

Design changes to Inspira

Develop and launch an Organization-wide information campaign to clarify the mobility framework/occupancy limits

Set up the senior review board

Set up initial job network boards for those networks scheduled to be operationalized in 2015 and 2016

Boards to begin determining any additional mobility requirements

Identify how human resources capacities will need to be reprofiled to implement mobility in accordance with new service delivery models

2014

Promulgate policy framework

Develop and test new modules of Inspira

Finalize the revised career development and learning strategy

Finalize a comprehensive staff and family support strategy

Identify and train network staffing officers and other support staff for the boards

Information campaign to ensure staff are aware of maximum position occupancy limits and which networks will be phased in first

January 2015

Operationalization of job networks begins

51. The importance of supporting staff and their families when they are moving has been highlighted by staff and by other organizations as a key success factor. Accordingly, the Organization is committed to enhancing mechanisms to support staff and their families who are geographically mobile to assist in the process of relocation and ensure smooth integration. The Working Group of the Staff Management Committee will continue to explore ways in which the Organization can provide this support. A key issue is the need to review host country agreements and the extent to which they allow employment of spouses, as recommended by the General Assembly (resolutions 61/244, sect. IV, para. 19, and 59/266, sect. VIII, para. 11). There is also a need to improve the information and guidance provided to staff and families on the relocation and integration process. In this area, in particular, opportunities to improve access to information resources and collaboration with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes can be leveraged for maximum impact with minimal injection of resources.

52. Career development and learning will also need to be linked in a more structured approach. To that end, the Office of Human Resources Management is currently undergoing a comprehensive review of career development, learning and training activities (including language training) within the Organization, with a view to revising the career development and learning strategy, with guidelines and recommendations for implementation.

53. The performance management and development system will also need to be adapted to a mobile organization. The Staff Management Committee Inter-sessional Working Group on Performance Management will aim to propose enhancements in a number of areas, including skills and competencies, evaluation and feedback mechanisms, and linkages between personal development plans and career development.

54. Following the two-year preparation period, the mobility framework would start to be implemented in a phased manner by job network. Staff would become subject to the mobility system when the job network they belong to becomes operational. This would ensure a smooth transition into the new system and enable the Organization to adjust processes in the light of experience and monitor the cost and impact of the mobility system.

55. An Organization-wide communication campaign will be developed to build awareness of the new mobility policy and provide information on the process and support available to staff. Targeted information-sharing campaigns will be conducted for staff members, by job network, to ensure awareness of position occupancy limits. Town hall meetings, iSeek articles and other materials, including frequently asked questions and suggestions on preparing for mobility, will be made available and adapted for the specificities of each job network.

Transitional measures

56. The introduction of the proposed mobility framework would be a significant change for the Organization and its staff and, as such, would require some transitional measures. The Staff Management Committee agreed to a number of measures to apply to currently serving staff, as follows:⁹

(a) Currently serving staff at the P-4 level who have commenced their lateral move or waiver requirements for eligibility to apply for positions at the P-5 level by 31 December 2012 will continue to be eligible to apply to job openings at the P-5 level in accordance with the current system (see ST/AI/2010/3, sect. 6.3) for four years from the implementation date (1 January 2015) until 31 December 2018;

(b) P-5 level staff on board as of 31 December 2012 will be exempt from the requirement for at least one geographic move when applying to job openings at the D-1 level for four years from the implementation date (1 January 2015) until 31 December 2018;

(c) From 1 January 2019, all staff will need to satisfy the geographic move requirement to be eligible to progress to P-5 and above.

⁹ The transitional measures would not apply to staff entering the Organization after 1 January 2013.

VII. Costs of mobility

57. As set out in paragraph 27, mobility can be defined broadly as a change in position that gives exposure to different kinds of work. In the case of geographic movement, a cost would be generated.

Cost of an individual geographic move

58. One-time costs for geographic moves include the relocation grant (lump-sum option for unaccompanied shipments), the assignment grant, and travel costs. Recurrent costs include the mobility allowance. The actual figures involved change depending on the profile of the staff member (e.g. grade and level, single or dependent and number of children), the category and designation of the duty station that the staff member is relocating to, the duration of assignment and the number of previous assignments undertaken by the staff member.

59. By way of example, for a P-4 (step 6) single staff member who has already moved once and now moves from New York to Bangkok for a two-year assignment, the estimated costs would be \$10,000 (relocation grant), \$16,600 (assignment grant), \$3,200 (travel costs¹⁰), \$4,000 (non-removal element) and \$12,320 (mobility allowance over the 2 years for someone undertaking their first move within the United Nations system), for a total of \$46,120 (amortized over 2 years to give an annual cost of \$23,060). If that staff member had a dependent spouse and two children the total cost would rise to an estimated \$78,000 (annual cost \$39,000). For a five-year assignment, the cost for the single staff member would total approximately \$80,100, while for the staff member with a dependent spouse and two children the cost would be around \$119,500 (annual costs of \$16,020 and \$23,900 respectively).

Current cost of mobility in the Organization

60. Currently, mobility-related expenditures are included under common staff costs together with expenditures associated with the recruitment of new staff. Nevertheless, efforts have been made to provide an indication of the level of expenditures related to mobility, which was feasible for those entities that record expenditures in IMIS (regular budget and extrabudgetary funds). The estimated expenditures relating to mobility for the biennium 2010-2011 amounted to approximately \$22.4 million under the regular budget and \$13.7 million in extrabudgetary resources — a total of \$36.1 million.

61. With regard to peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as expenditures are recorded in multiple financial systems that are not integrated (IMIS for Headquarters and SUN systems for peacekeeping and special political missions), mobility-related expenditures were not easily identified. The total expenditures relating to the transfer/appointment of existing and new staff, including payment of hardship and mobility allowance, for the financial periods 2009/10 and 2010/11 amounted to \$243.6 million. For special political missions, total expenditures amounted to \$22.1 million.

¹⁰ The estimates provided in these examples are based on the proposed travel policy that family members travel in economy class.

Future costs

62. Many factors will drive the future cost of mobility, including both the profile of the geographic moves that are made and the number of moves that are made.

63. At present, the Organization cannot predict how many staff will change their duty station in any given year. While over time mobility patterns may emerge, because the system being proposed is largely self-initiated, the number of geographic moves that will be undertaken by staff in future cannot be precisely predicted. Even if the costing for a number of different scenarios could be provided, its usefulness for planning purposes would be limited, as the selection of scenarios would be arbitrary. Accordingly, it is not feasible to give a firm projection of future costs. However, this is equally true under the current system.

64. To the extent that the new framework would lead to a higher number of geographic moves, it will result in an increase in the related common staff costs. Any changes in actual common staff costs would therefore need to be reported retroactively and would subsequently form the basis for future common staff cost projections.

65. However, it is anticipated that despite the proposed requirement for geographic mobility for eligibility to positions at the P-5 level and above, there would not necessarily be a sudden surge in geographic moves (and therefore costs), as 40 per cent of currently serving P-4 staff members already have a geographic move recorded in IMIS. As indicated in the transitional measures, staff with two lateral moves would also be able to count those in lieu of a geographic move until 2018.

66. The phased implementation of the new framework by job network will enable the Organization to monitor and manage any increase in expenditures as each job network becomes operational beginning in 2015. The enterprise resource planning system (Umoja) will also be configured to better capture the costs associated with mobility to allow for more precise reporting of any changes in expenditure related to mobility.

VIII. Criteria, indicators and benchmarks

67. Five years after implementation of the new framework, a follow-up survey will be conducted to gauge the extent to which staff feel that their mobility aspirations have been met under the new framework as well as whether the Organization is effectively supporting them. A successful outcome would be a higher customer satisfaction rate, both from staff with regard to their own mobility and the role played by the Organization, and from those with responsibility for delivering the mandates.

68. In addition, the indicators set out below would be useful to help measure the success of the proposed framework and assess the extent to which the strategic objectives of mobility have been achieved. These will also assist the Organization to monitor improvements and refine the framework as part of a continuous process of improving the Organization's talent management.

Indicator 1: increased predictability and stability in staffing

69. Success will mean more even vacancy rates across offices/missions and duty stations. This will be measured by comparing vacancy rates throughout the Secretariat and assessing if they have become more constant across the Secretariat. Table 2 shows the average vacancy rates for regular budget posts in the Professional category and above at Headquarters and in the main offices away from Headquarters and the regional commissions in 2011. Table 3 shows the corresponding figures for field operations as at 30 June 2012.

Table 2

Average vacancy rates for regular budget posts in the Professional category and above at Headquarters and in the main offices away from Headquarters and the regional commission in 2011

	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)</i>	<i>No. of approved posts</i>
Main office		
Vienna	1.3	174
Geneva	4.9	959
Nairobi	3.1	191
New York	5.5	2 078
Total, main office	5.0	3 402
Regional commission		
Economic Commission for Africa	18.1	238
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	11.2	193
Economic Commission for Europe	5.9	125
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	4.6	216
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	10.2	115
Total, regional commissions	10.6	887

Table 3

Average vacancy rates in the Professional category and above (including the Field Service) in field operations as at 30 June 2012

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)</i>	<i>No. of approved international posts</i>
BINUCA	18.7	77
BNUB	6.7	59
CNMC	13.3	10
MINURSO	8.3	108
MINUSTAH	15.9	533
MONUSCO	21.0	1 184
SASG	8.3	16
UNAMA	22.6	526

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)</i>	<i>No. of approved international posts</i>
UNAMI	20.1	472
UNAMID	27.8	1 519
UNDOF	14.6	48
UNFICYP	5.1	39
UNIFIL	16.7	401
UNIOGBIS	12.2	64
UNIPSIL	12.4	41
UNLB	25	107
UNMIK	13.9	166
UNMIL	17.2	541
UNMIS	19.1	1 098
UNMIT	19.7	462
UNOCI	15.3	437
UNSOA	17.9	145

Abbreviations: BINUCA, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic; BNUB, United Nations Office in Burundi; CNMC, Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; MINURSO, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; MINUSTAH, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; SASG, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus; UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; UNAMI, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; UNDOF, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; UNFICYP, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; UNIOGBIS, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau; UNIPSIL, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone; UNLB, United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy; UNMIK, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; UNMIL, United Nations Mission in Liberia; UNMIS, United Nations Mission in the Sudan; UNMIT, United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste; UNOCI, United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire; UNSOA, United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Indicator 2: more equitable sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations

70. This will be measured by monitoring the number of staff who have served for long periods in D or E hardship locations. Success will mean a reduction in the number of staff spending more than five years in those hardship locations.¹¹ Job network boards will attempt to select/reassign staff who have reached the three-year occupancy limit for D and E duty stations to positions in locations that are not categorized as D or E. Over time, therefore, these numbers should decrease. Table 4 provides a breakdown of staff with five years of service in hardship locations as at 30 June 2011.

¹¹ Reassignment will likely not occur precisely at the three-year mark; therefore, five years is the timeframe selected.

Table 4
Staff with five years in hardship locations as at 30 June 2011

Category	Total staff	Five years in a hardship location	
		Number of staff	Percentage of total staff
Director	67	31	46
Professional	795	386	49
Field Service	1 479	851	58
Grand total	2 341	1 268	54

Note: Data from IMIS. Staff on temporary contracts, in the Tribunals and administered by the United Nations Development Programme were excluded.

Indicator 3: an increase in senior managers with geographic mobility

71. Geographic mobility is defined as movement between two duty stations in different countries, with continuous service of at least one year in each duty station. At present, 46 per cent of P-5 staff, 41 per cent of D-1 staff and 34 per cent of D-2 staff have a geographic move recorded in IMIS. Success would be an increase in the proportion of senior managers that have been geographically mobile. Table 5 provides details concerning senior managers who had been geographically mobile as at 30 June 2011.

Table 5
Senior managers who had been geographically mobile as at 30 June 2011

Level	Total staff	Geographically mobile staff	
		Number	Percentage of total staff
D-2	152	51	34
D-1	484	199	41
P-5	1 529	702	46
Grand total	2 165	952	44

Note: Data from IMIS. Includes country changes from 30 March 2000 to 30 June 2011 for more than one year. Staff on temporary contracts, in the Tribunals and administered by the United Nations Development Programme are excluded.

IX. Conclusion

72. The goal of the present proposal is a truly global civil service with the highest standards of performance. The Secretariat of the future will be an integrated Organization with a mobile, experienced staff working to fulfil the Organization's complex and interrelated mandates.

73. The mobility framework presented thus aims to deliver this global Organization, with a workforce able to develop skills and experience and share service equitably in different duty stations around the world, and which can be managed in a strategic manner. The goal is that the framework, in meeting both the

needs of the Organization and individual staff members, will bring about a global, dynamic and flexible workforce that can efficiently deliver the Organization's mandates to the highest standards.

74. Should the General Assembly agree to the framework, the Secretary-General will report regularly to it on progress made on the implementation of the present report, starting at the sixty-eighth session.

X. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

75. The General Assembly is requested to approve the proposed mobility and career development framework set out in the present report.